



CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT
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**ASIA-PACIFIC DISEASE OUTBREAK
/SURVEILLANCE REPORT**

Week of Jun 06, 2005

AUSTRALIA

Spotted Fever in Adelaide, Australia

A potentially fatal disease not previously seen in mainland Australia has been identified in Adelaide's southern suburbs and Fleurieu Peninsula (south Australia). Four people have been confirmed with the disease, which may be linked to climate change or living close to native fauna where there may be a greater risk of tick bites. The disease, rickettsial spotted fever, causes headache, muscle ache, lethargy and high fever. A spotted rash usually appears on the limbs and torso several days after the first symptoms, and victims can become very ill quickly, with the possibility of death. All four confirmed cases responded quickly to antibiotics and have made a full recovery. The infection is caused by the bacterium *Rickettsia honei*, found in ticks that infest sleepy lizards and other reptiles. If the tick bites a human, the bacterium can spread.

Source:

· NineMSN.com, Jun 05, 2005, <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=51996>

· Promed Mail, Jun 06, 2005,

http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:2669827660830656710::NO::F2400_P1001_BACK_PAGE,F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1000,29209

INDIA

25 People Die, 10,000 Affected by Malaria in Assam, India

Twenty-five people have died of malaria and more than 10 000 have been affected with the disease which is assuming epidemic proportions in Assam, India (northeast India). At least 15 of the fatalities were reported from eastern Assam's Karbi Anglong district during the past week. Heavy rains in Assam led to the outbreak of malaria. The initial symptoms of malaria are high fever and chills, and at times diarrhea and stomach ache. Villagers often bring patients to the hospital very late, when chances of survival are very remote. There is still much ignorance about the fatal consequences of malaria.

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The northeast is a known "malaria zone," with the disease claiming an estimated 500 lives annually. At least 2000 health workers, including doctors and paramedics, are being rushed to malaria-prone areas to prevent the disease from spreading.

Source:

· NewIndPress.com, Jun 04, 2005, <http://www.newindpress.com/NewsItems.asp?ID=IEP20050603084731&Page=P&Title=States&Topic=0>
· Promed Mail, Jun 04, 2005, http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:16251568461597745183::NO::F2400_P1001_BACK_PAGE,F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1010,29193

11 Children Die of Diarrhea in Manipur, India

Eleven children have died following an outbreak of diarrhea in villages adjoining the Churachandpur and Chandel districts of Manipur (northeast India) in the past few days. At least 50 others are being treated for the disease that may take on epidemic proportions, according to health officials. Medical teams have been rushed to the area (that additionally suffers from lack of even basic health facilities).

Source:

· Hindustan Times, Jun 06, 2005, http://www.hindustantimes.com/news/7454_1390413.000800050002.htm

INDONESIA

More New Cases of Poliomyelitis in Indonesia

On 9 June 2005, more new polio cases were confirmed in Indonesia, bringing the total number to 34. Five of these are from neighboring districts as the index case (Lebak, Cianjur and Bogor districts -- the western end of the island of Java), while one of the new cases is from the same district as the index case (Sukabumi district).

Source:

· Communicable Disease Surveillance and Response, WHO, Jun 09, 2005, http://www.who.int/csr/don/2005_06_09/en/index.html

JAPAN

20th Case of Mad Cow Disease Confirmed in Japan

Japan has confirmed its 20th case of mad cow disease in a Holstein from northern Japan. All meat, internal organs and parts from this cattle will be incinerated to prevent the meat from entering into the market. Eating beef from an infected cow is thought to cause the fatal variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, or vCJD, in humans. Japan has found 20 animals infected with the fatal illness - formally known as bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE - since the country's first case was detected in 2001. In February, Japan confirmed its first case of vCJD in a man who died in December 2004. Authorities believe the man contracted the disease during a month-long visit to Britain. Japan's 19th case was diagnosed last week in a cow raised on the northernmost island of Hokkaido. The accumulated number of cases in 2005 is 6.

Source:

· The Star Online, Jun 06, 2005, <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2005/6/6/latest/20050606171825&sec=Latest>
· Promed Mail, Jun 06, 2005,

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MYANMAR

Thousands of HIV-AIDS Patients in Myanmar Lack Anti-Retroviral Drugs

Thousands of HIV-AIDS patients in Myanmar lack access to anti-retroviral drugs because of a funding shortage, according to the UN. Myanmar's health department can provide the drugs to only about 500 of the 25,000 people infected with the AIDS virus who need them. The World Health Organization and other agencies have been providing assistance but it is not enough and more funding is needed. According to Myanmar's government more than 300,000 of the country's 54 million people have HIV-AIDS, but health experts believe the actual figure is higher. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency's World Factbook estimates that Myanmar's population is significantly lower mainly because of mortality caused by AIDS. UNAIDS estimates that more than 600,000 people in Myanmar, aged 15 to 49, are infected with HIV.

Source:

· The Star Online, Jun 07, 2005, <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2005/6/7/latest/20050607141933&sec=Latest>

PHILIPPINES

30 Loggers Contract Malaria in Isabela, Philippines, in Past 2 Months

Thirty loggers have contracted malaria in Isabela, Philippines, particularly along the Sierra Madre mountain range, during the past two months. The loggers usually stay in the mountains for weeks or months. The malaria victims came from Barangays Sindon Bayabo and Bintacan, which are close to the Sierra Madre ranges. Records show that there were more people affected by malaria in 2000 and 2001. At least 19 people died of malaria in the coastal town of Palanan in 2000, while 1,437 people were diagnosed to have been afflicted with the disease in 2001. Malaria is common near large bodies of water such as lakes and streams, which serve as breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Concern over malaria heightened after two journalists and a cameraman recently contracted malaria while on assignment in Palawan. The three later died.

Source:

· The Manila Times, Jun 07, 2005, <http://www.manilatimes.net/national/2005/jun/07/yehey/prov/20050607pro6.html>

Public Being Warned of Meningococcemia in Vizcaya, Philippines

Health officials are warning the public against meningococcemia disease in Vizcaya, Philippines (northern Philippines) after an 11-month-old girl was believed to have died of the fatal blood disease on June 7. The results of laboratory tests have not yet been released. Resident physicians reported that the girl had mottling on her skin and rashes on the groin which became worse in her upper extremities. Epidemiologists believe there may be other probable cases because 43 people have been in contact with the girl before she died. These probable cases have been identified and administered

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rifampicin.

Source:

· The Manila Times, Jun 10, 2005, <http://www.manilatimes.net/national/2005/jun/10/yehey/prov/20050610pro3.html>

South Cotabato, Philippines on Alert for Malaria and Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever

Health officials are closely monitoring several villages in Koronadal City and three other municipalities of South Cotabato, Philippines due to the rising cases of the mosquito-borne malaria and dengue hemorrhagic fever. Health officials have raised the alert for malaria, dengue and several other viral and bacterial infections in the province due to the onset of the rainy season. The other diseases being monitored are diarrhea, chicken pox and mumps. More than 300 cases of dengue have been recorded since January and the cases continue to increase. Several children have died.

Source:

· Mindanews, Jun 06, 2005, <http://www.mindanews.com/2005/06/05nws-alert.html>

Philippine Department of Health Issues Advisory on Leptospirosis

The Philippine Department of Health (DoH) has issued an advisory on leptospirosis with the onset of the rainy season. Cases of leptospirosis usually rise at this time of year when many areas become flooded. Last year, the incidence of leptospirosis was highest in the National Capital Region (NCR) among the 21 to 30 years old age group. Infected rat urine mixed with floodwater is the source of leptospirosis. Direct skin contact particularly when an individual has a cut or open wound with the infected floodwater, wet soil or plants (urinated on by an infected rat) makes the person open to infection. Pest control as well as proper garbage disposal are recommended. Symptoms include sudden onset of fever, chills, muscle aches, pain in the lower extremities, red eyes, and yellowing of skin.

Source:

· The Manila Bulletin Online, Jun 08, 2005, <http://www.mb.com.ph/MTNN2005060836453.html>

TAIWAN

Enterovirus Infections at their Peak but Under Control in Taiwan

The current enterovirus outbreak, which has infected 50 children and killed 5, is now under control. Although the enterovirus infections are at a peak, the general situation has been controlled. None of the enterovirus strains have mutated significantly. As the outbreak is expected to peak in two weeks, health officials are urging medical personnel and parents with young children to be alert to prevent any further spread of the disease. Enteroviruses are transmitted via direct contact with secretions from an infected person or contact with contaminated surfaces or objects.

Source:

· Central News Agency, Jun 04, 2005, <http://english.www.gov.tw/index.jsp?action=cna&cnaid=10373>

· Promed Mail, Jun 05, 2005,

http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:16251568461597745183::NO::F2400_P1001_BACK_PAGE.F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1010,29201

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THAILAND

Malaria Cases at Alarming Levels in Three Thai Border Provinces

The number of malaria cases in three upper southern Thai provinces (Chumphon, Surat Thani and Ranong) are at alarming levels even as the number of cases has dropped in other parts of the country. Chumphon was the worst affected with a 140% increase in reported cases. The province reported 465 cases last month compared with 185 in the same period last year. Illegal workers from neighboring countries have been among the worst hit by the disease. Fearing arrests, employers hide them from health authorities, who could treat them with vaccines. This in turn has inflated the number of victims this year. Employers are now being encouraged to have their workers checked and treated by medical authorities. To deal with the outbreak, the health ministry has sent a number of mobile units to affected areas.

Source:

· The Nation, Jun 07, 2005, <http://www.komchadluek.net/breaking/read.php?lang=en&newsid=63563>

Nation-Wide Polio Vaccinations Planned for Thailand

The Thai Public Health Ministry is calling for the distribution of vaccine to six major target groups following the reappearance of polio in Indonesia. The WHO confirms that Thailand is at risk. The six major target groups in the revaccination program will include marginalized people in the three southernmost provinces, slum communities, alien worker communities, areas with polio-vaccine coverage lower than 90% and any other areas that show incomplete records for vaccine coverage. Half of the 20 people infected with polio in Indonesia were not vaccinated. Genetic testing showed that the re-emerging poliovirus is rooted in Nigeria. However, no travel advisory has been issued. Each year about 300 travelers from Nigeria come to Thailand and more come from Indonesia, both legally and illegally.

Source:

· The Nation, Jun 07, 2005, <http://www.komchadluek.net/breaking/read.php?lang=en&newsid=63561>

Thailand on Alert for Dengue Fever

The health ministry of Thailand is on alert for the start of the dengue fever season next month by increasing disease surveillance throughout the country. In the south more than 16% of the population suffered from dengue fever. The highest incidence of the disease is in Songkhla where there are 181 dengue fever patients followed by Trang with 164 cases and Pattalung 103 cases. However, as a percentage of the population, Satun, Trang and Pattalung have the highest incidence of dengue fever. There have been no reported deaths from the disease in any of the southern provinces so far after a 13 year-old boy in Bangkok died of dengue shock syndrome last month. The three southernmost provinces will be under surveillance as a widespread outbreak in August and September is possible,

Source:

· The Nation, Jun 08, 2005, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/latest/>

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VIETNAM

Additional 3 Human Cases of Avian Influenza Confirmed in Vietnam

The Ministry of Health in Viet Nam has confirmed an additional 3 human cases of infection with H5N1 avian influenza virus. The most recent case was on 26 April 2005. An additional death from the disease was also confirmed. The newly confirmed cases bring the total, in Viet Nam, since mid-December 2004 to 52 cases. Of these, 18 have died and 2 are currently hospitalized. These figures bring the total number of laboratory-confirmed cases in East Asia during the period 16 December 2004 to 8 June 2005 to 56 and the number of deaths to 22. During this period no cases and no deaths were recorded in Thailand, and the 4 cases and 4 deaths in Cambodia occurred in communities close to the border with Viet Nam. It appears the risk to humans of avian influenza virus infection has diminished since the last confirmed human case in the area on 26 April 2005.

Source:

· World Health Organization (WHO), CSR, Disease Outbreak News, Jun 08, 2005, http://www.who.int/csr/don/2005_06_08a/en/index.html
· Promed Mail, Jun 08, 2005, http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:3200355214121339594::NO::F2400_P1001_BACK_PAGE,F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1000,29226
· Reuters Foundation Alertnet, Jun 09, 2005, <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/HAN133676.htm>

Other World News

IRAQ

IRAQ to Conduct Emergency Polio Immunization Campaign

Iraq will launch a massive polio immunization campaign, expected to reach 4.7 million children under age five. For the past five years Iraq successfully controlled polio but due to the outbreaks in the neighboring countries they have decided to vaccinate all children to prevent the re-emergence of the disease. The last major outbreak in Iraq occurred in 1999, with 68 cases reported. Only four cases were reported in 2000. More than 5,000 vaccination teams will be involved in the door-to-door immunization drive expected to cover all governorates. Special attention will be paid to high-risk areas, new community settlements and internally displaced communities. The first phase is to start on 19 June and a second will take place on 24 July 2005.

Source:

· Reuters Foundation Alertnet, Jun 09, 2005, <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/c0c81931c5cb8b2bc9f58e1eae67c5d.htm>

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